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MEDIA RELEASE

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Verizon Earns Air District's Top Honor

Victorville – The local headquarters of one of the world's leading telecommunications providers was recognized for its pollution prevention efforts today, as the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) presented the 10th Annual *Exemplar* Awards during its monthly Governing Board meeting in Victorville.

Board Chairman Robert Leone and Executive Director Eldon Heaston presented the local regulatory air agency's highest honor to **Verizon Communications** of Victorville, for developing and implementing the first hydrogen fuel cell backup power system to be utilized in San Bernardino County's High Desert.

In response to frequent power outages caused by lightning strikes in the Barstow area, Verizon began field testing two small-scale hydrogen fuel cells in Daggett and Coolwater, near Barstow, in December of 2005. The systems – which automatically kick in when an outage occurs - provide backup power to telecommunications equipment serving residential and business customers throughout the area, including critical circuits for the Daggett airport.

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Unlike conventional diesel-powered backup generators, these zero-emissions systems produce only heated air and water byproducts. Consequently, Verizon has realized significant reductions in carbon dioxide and other pollutants from the combined fuel that would be required for technicians to travel to the jobsite to repair an outage, and to tow and operate a conventional portable diesel generator.

Based on the success of their hydrogen fuel cell project, Verizon is now also exploring the use of this technology in providing backup power to wireless base stations.

The 2005/2006 *Exemplar* Award was accepted by Joe Stodola and Ken Ammerman, Victorville Area Managers of Network Operations for Verizon.

The *Exemplar* Awards recognize High Desert entities that demonstrate an exceptional commitment to clean air through the development of voluntary activities/projects that reduce or prevent air pollution within the MDAQMD's jurisdiction, which encompasses San Bernardino County's High Desert and Riverside County's Palo Verde Valley. The *Exemplar* Awards are presented each September in conjunction with National Pollution Prevention Week.

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